

# Setting Up the Family Chore Project for 7-11-year-olds



## Step 1

## Create a List of Chore Options

Use the following list of chores to choose which jobs you would be okay with your child doing independently (or with some supervision).

- If there are chores on this list that you expect your child to do without earning money because it is an established responsibility to help the family in that way, create a list of those chores and explain to your child that some work is a required contribution to the family, while other chores are extra. If he/she takes on added responsibilities, he/she can earn money, or income, for completing the work.



## Chore Options for 7-11-year-olds

### Household Cleaning:



### Food/ Meals:

- Sweep the floor
- Collect trash from bathroom, bedrooms, etc.
- Dust (choose reachable and non-breakable places/items)
- Clean up/organize toys
- Organize kids' books on bookshelves
- Make bed
- Help change sheets
- Refill toilet paper and paper towels
- Clean bathroom sink/counters
- Vacuum floors (only if a battery-powered/cordless vacuum or Dustbuster is available)
- Water plants or flowers

- Help carry light bags of groceries from store or car
- Put away groceries
- Help with dinner preparations
  - Wash produce
  - Find ingredients
  - Rip up lettuce
  - Season foods
  - Mix non-hot food items
  - Simple chopping using kid-safe knives

- Set the table
  - Fold napkins
- Clear table space
- Scrape dishes into trash and put in dishwasher/sink
- Put away refrigerated items from the table
- Transfer leftover food into Tupperware containers
- Wash the table after meals
- Prepare simple snacks
- Pack lunch for school
- Unload/empty lunch box, putting items away or in sink/dishwasher
- Help make shopping list for groceries and other household supplies
- Help plan the weekly menu
- Make simple breakfasts (cereal and milk, yogurt, microwave oatmeal)

### Laundry:

- Sort dirty laundry (ex: whites and colors)
- Fold clean laundry (if new to folding, start with socks, underwear, towels, and pants and advance to shirts and more complex folds)
- Carry laundry to and from machines
- Put clean laundry away in drawers/bins
- Hang up wet laundry
- Transfer laundry from washer to dryer
- Lay out clothes/planned outfits for the day and/or week ahead of time

# Chore Options for 7-11-year-olds

**Outdoor:**

**Pets:**

- Rake leaves and/or scoop leaf piles into bags
- Help shovel snow
- Water plants/flowers
- Pull weeds
- Get mail/newspaper
- Assist in window cleaning
- Help parents wash car
- Stack plastic chairs
- Organize shed, garage, or other areas as designated

- Feed pet
- Clean up after pet
- Clean cage
- Help with grooming (try tasks like pass the soap, dry off specific area, etc.)
- Train pet
- Walk (in a safe area with adult)

**Family Relationships:**

**Add Your Own** – Add chores that work for your specific family and living situation. For example, if you live on a farm, the kids may collect chicken eggs.

- Help a younger sibling with life skills as needed (zip coat, put away toys, choose outfit, etc.).
- Complete the chore by mentoring or modeling for a younger sibling (ultimately the 7-11 is responsible for the task).

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## Step 2

## Decide on the Chore Income

The chore income is the money you give your child for completing chores. By connecting chores with income, children can begin to understand the connection between working hard and earning money. Paying for chores also helps children develop a lifelong habit of working in order to earn money, which is critical to success in life.

- Consider how much money you usually spend on your child in a week. Consider giving this amount to your child as chore income, rather than spending it on the items you usually buy for the child, so he/she can decide how to spend the money him/herself. In order to make it easier for your child to count his/her money over time, make sure that the chore income is given in smaller bills so your child can easily divide money into the jars.
- If you give your child the same amount of money for completing chores that you would normally spend on him/her during the week, you will be paying the same amount, but your child will be learning to manage how it is spent.
- The amount of money given is far less important than the notion that a child must practice taking responsibility for financial decision-making with whatever quantity of money is given.
- Know that when setting the income total, you will get some money back for household expenses. This might affect the total you choose.



## Step 3

## Get Your Child Involved

Ask your child to create a list of chores he/she thinks should be completed and increase family productivity. Share your brainstormed list of chores with children as they share theirs with you. Have a discussion with your child about which chores are on both lists and which are worthwhile. Ultimately, the decision is yours as the parent, but giving your child ownership in the decision-making process can make a big difference in his/her motivation.

- Let kids put in the effort to complete these chores on their own. Even if the chore is not done perfectly at the beginning, your child will grow in his/her ability to complete the task.



## Step 4

## Choose the Chores

Based on your discussion with your child, choose a reasonable number of chores for your child to complete across the week.

- Think about whether the chores require daily completion (wiping down the table after dinner) or weekly (putting away clean laundry) to help you choose the right number of chores.
  - Be clear with your child about the expectations for how often these chores should be completed.
  - Consider color-coding the chores into “daily” and “weekly” categories or using images or symbols to note the differences visually and quickly.
- Select the type and quantity of chores that work within your child’s schedule each day, especially if your child is new to taking on chores. Consider adding chores, one a time, once your child consistently succeeds in completing the original list.



## Step 5

## Decide on a Payment Schedule

- Explain to your child the fixed total chore income amount. Then, gather your child's input on the money-earning decisions – which chores should earn more money and which should earn a smaller amount, based on the difficulty or frequency of the task. Make sure the amount designated for each chore will add up equal to the total chore income.
  - The agreed-upon income can change over time, especially if your child takes on more chores.
- Work with your child to set a payment schedule on which you both agree. It is important to keep to the agreed-upon payday/schedule to prepare your child for the real world, where payday cannot be moved earlier to accommodate special requests. Work with your child to enter payday on a calendar (digitally or in print) to gain familiarity with calendars, entering events, etc.
- Explain to your child that if he/she does not complete the agreed-upon chores, the chore income will be reduced accordingly (skipping chores will lead to earning less money for that week).
  - It is important to be consistent with this expectation so your child understands that the chore income is directly tied to the agreed-upon work/chores.



## Step 6

## Set up a Place to Save

The most practical way for a child at this age to begin saving is to physically put the money into a jar or piggy bank, where he/she can see it and return to it to make sure it's still there.

- Set up a jar or piggy bank for each of the saving categories:
  - Emergency
  - Short-term
  - Long-term
  - If you plan to encourage your child to set aside funds for Sharing (charitable giving), create a jar for this purpose too.
- Make sure you pay in smaller bills so your child can split the money into the various savings jars, etc.

